THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATl SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b)The Government have notified "Freight Subsidy (for far flung areas) Scheme, 2002" effective 1 st April 2002. The scheme provides for subsidy on transportation of PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG in far flung areas.The scheme does not cover petrol.

The budgetary provision for the subsidy under the above scheme for 2002-03 and 2003-04 has been Rs. 239.14 crore and Rs. 246 crore respectively.

Rehabilitation scheme to dependants of Kargil martyrs

2957. SHRI S.M. LALAN BASHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have quietly abandoned the scheme of helping widows and dependants of the Kargil martyrs;

(b) if so, whether Government have informed the widows and dependants in this regard;

(c) if so, what was their reaction;

(d) whether any delegation has come and represented the matter, and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATl SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (e) No, Sir. The Special Scheme for allotment of retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships to widows/next of kin of Defence personnel killed in action in 'Operation Vijay' in Kargil formulated by the Government is still in operation.

Production of crude oil

2958. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a plan has been drawn up to achieve self-sufficiency in the production of crude oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of production of crude oil within the country and of imports, with the annual foreign exchange outgo thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Given the increasing demand for petroleum products and the current level of import dependence, it is difficult to envisage self-sufficiency in the near future. However, several important steps have been taken to increase oil and gas production, which include the following:

(i) to improve the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/lmproved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes; in particular Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs. 10,000 crore, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields.

(ii) to increase exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); Under the three rounds of NELP, Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) have been signed for 70 blocks.

(iii) to explore in new areas, especially in deep water and difficult frontier areas, as also explore in the deeper layers of the producing fields.

(iv) to develop faster the newly discovered fields and to step up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas.

(v) to acquire acreages abroad.

(c) The indigenous crude oil production during 2002-03 was 33.08 million metric tonne (MMT) and the crude oil import was about 82 MMT at a total value of Rs. 76,195 crore (US $ 15,759 million).

Petrol Pumps in Uttaranchal

†2959. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps functioning in Uttaranchal;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.